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IMPLEMENTATION OF THE OUTCOME OF THE WORLD SUMMIT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME OF ACTION OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT

ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE OUTCOME OF THE FOURTH WORLD CONFERENCE ON WOMEN

PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF THE RIGHTS OF CHILDREN

ELIMINATION OF RACISM AND RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS

Letter dated 27 March 1996 from the Permanent Representative of Mexico to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I enclose herewith the text of a joint communiqué issued on 14 March 1996 in the town of Puebla, Mexico, at the close of the Regional Conference on Migration. As you can see from the enclosed document, the participants were the Governments of Belize, Canada, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama and the United States of America.

* A/51/50.

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Given the importance of migration in the activities of our Organization, I venture to request that the enclosed document be circulated as a document of the General Assembly under items 45, 97 (g), 106, 107, 109, 111 and 113 of the preliminary list.

(Signed) Manuel TELLO
Permanent Representative

ANNEX

Regional Conference on Migration

Joint Communiqué issued in Puebla on 14 March 1996

A Regional Conference on Migration was held on 13 and 14 March 1996 in Puebla, Mexico, with the participation of the Governments of Belize, Canada, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama and the United States of America. After a useful and productive dialogue, the participating Governments issued the following joint communiqué.

The Governments recognized that the origins, manifestations and effects of migration, including refugee movements are important issues on the agenda of the international community. By and large, migration is beneficial and has potential advantages, both for the countries of origin and for the countries of destination; however, in order for these benefits to be realized migration must be orderly. Migration is a complex historical phenomenon. In recent years there has been an increase in large migratory flows due, in part, to asymmetries between different economies and labour markets and also due to political and social factors, natural disasters, environmental degradation, rapid population growth, trade and investment barriers and also to civil conflicts. The Governments therefore drew attention to the need for mutual cooperation in order to promote economic growth and employment in order to reduce poverty.

The Governments also recognized that each country perceives the causes, dimensions and consequences of migration in its own way. They agreed that a comprehensive, objective and long-term approach to the origins, manifestations and effects of migration in the region would contribute to a better understanding of the phenomenon, help counteract anti-immigrant attitudes and strengthen relations between participating States.

They also recognized the need to promote regional cooperation in order to attenuate the structural factors that give rise to migration in the region, without detriment to the bilateral cooperation programmes.

The Governments recognized the sovereign right and legitimate interest of each country to safeguard its boundaries and to enforce its own immigration laws, always observing strict respect for the human rights of the migrants, as defined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 and other relevant international instruments, irrespective of their nationality, race, age, religion, sex or immigration status.

The participating Governments agree to:

1. Expedite the development and adoption of a comprehensive, objective and long-term approach to the regional phenomenon of migration in order to address both its causes and its manifestations in an effective manner.

2. Promote a better understanding of the regional and international phenomenon of migration through specialized studies that will identify and

contribute to the implementation of measures to resolve the issues that prompt migration and that derive from it.

3. Promote the economic and social development of the region by encouraging trade and productive investment and by implementing economic and social policies as factors which, along with international cooperation, can help address some of the causes of migration.

4. Recognize that migration can make a positive economic and cultural contribution both to countries of origin and to countries of destination.

5. Condemn violations of the human rights of migrants and others, irrespective of their immigration status, and to strive to eliminate such violations. Particular attention will be given to the special needs of women and children, including their protection when appropriate.

6. Enhance public awareness of the human rights of migrants as a way of promoting respect for their dignity and counteracting anti-immigrant attitudes and eradicating illegal acts targeting immigrants.

7. Promote national cooperation and other forms of cooperation in order to establish programmes that will help meet the basic needs of undocumented migrants who are in the custody of immigration authorities in each country pending the determination of their immigration status.

8. Recognize and encourage the work of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), that develop programmes of assistance for migrants, as a supplement to Government efforts in this area.

9. Encourage States of the region, and in particular those with common borders, to promote consultation mechanisms on immigration matters and protection of the human rights of migrants with the participation of the authorities at various levels of government, law-enforcement officials and consular and diplomatic representatives of the countries.

10. Promote in the appropriate forums the exchange of information and experience regarding immigration labour issues.

11. Consider and, where appropriate, encourage consultations prior to the adoption of immigration measures which may affect countries in the region, particularly States with common borders, with full respect for the sovereignty of each State.

12. Establish an exchange of immigration legislation and procedures as a resource for use by countries of the region in analysing, reviewing and improving immigration laws and procedures.

13. Affirm the importance of taking steps to facilitate documented migration.

14. With full respect for the national sovereignty and territorial jurisdiction of each country, and within the context of juridical arrangements

established with other States, coordinate efforts to combat criminal organizations engaged in migrant trafficking. To that end, the Governments undertake to exchange timely information so as to give countries of the region a chance to adopt appropriate measures to combat networks and connections of migrant traffickers; and to exchange additional data to prevent and detect such criminal organizations.

15. Encourage the characterization, in the national legislation of States which have not done so, of trafficking in migrants as a criminal offence in order to help eradicate the organizations of traffickers operating in the region.

16. Promote better understanding, in order to raise society's awareness, of the harmful effects of migrant trafficking, by condemning the human degradation, indignities and abuses associated with this activity, through public information programmes as a means, among others, of helping to identify and implement measures designed to reduce and resolve the problems deriving therefrom.

17. Expand regional cooperation in the field of technical assistance and training so as to refine national systems for the investigation, handling of evidence and prosecution of traffickers in migrants.

18. Encourage the exchange of experience regarding the phenomenon of migration in appropriate multilateral forums and, where appropriate, further consultations with relevant international agencies.

19. Hold periodic consultations between countries in the region in order to advance cooperation on specific issues relating to migration. To that end, inter alia, sponsor meetings of immigration officials, using the experience of the work done by the Central American Commission for Migration (OCAM), and other regional coordination bodies.

20. Promote the exchange of information and regional cooperation aimed at technical assistance and human resources training in order to control the flow of undocumented migrants from outside the region.

21. Advance more effective mechanisms to combat the falsification and adulteration of immigration documents.

The Governments expressed satisfaction at the positive spirit and cooperation which characterized the debates. Participating delegations also thanked the Government of Mexico for organizing the Conference and recognized the need to continue the constructive dialogue on that important issue in order to strengthen regional cooperation on migration. Accordingly, the Governments decided to hold a meeting, at the technical level, in Mexico in the third quarter of the present year, in order to follow up and give effect to the agreements reached at this Conference. They also decided to have another meeting, at the political level, in the first few months of 1997, in Panama City, Republic of Panama, and to consider the possibility of inviting some South American States to that meeting as observers. To that end, the Government of

Panama is to request logistical support from the International Organization for Migration (IOM).